

# Going Green Means...

*Reduce the toxins in your life (and the planet!)*

## You Feel Great!

### **LOOK UNDER YOUR KITCHEN SINK AND REMOVE TOXIC PRODUCTS.**

Almost everyone in the world has a cupboard full of poisons under their kitchen sink. They can waft out into the house and make people sick! Remove anything that has a "signal" or warning word that is stronger than a "caution." Call your local recycling center for information about disposal (don't pour the product down the drain).

### **USE ALTERNATIVES TO DISINFECTANTS AND CHLORINE BLEACH.**

Just as antibiotics are causing drug resistance, so too are disinfectants. Chlorine bleach can cause cancer causing chemicals to form in the waste water stream. Make a safer antibacterial spray by using straight household vinegar, or put 1 teaspoon of an essential oil such as lavender, to 2 cups of water in a spray bottle. (Avoid the eyes with these sprays.)

### **USE THESE FOUR BASICS FOR CLEANING AND CLEAN EVERYTHING IN THE HOUSE.**

Baking soda, washing soda (in the laundry section of most supermarkets), a good soap or detergent, and household vinegar. Go to [care2.com/healthyliving](http://care2.com/healthyliving) to find hundreds of nontoxic cleaning formulas.

### **WET CLEAN AND DON'T DRY CLEAN YOUR CLOTHES.**

Some cities have good wet clean facilities, but you can hand wash wool, silk, and rayon yourself, you just need to know the tricks to prevent shrinkage. Never twist or wring out wool or silk, hand wash them in a cool fabric, and use a very mild detergent (one with a pH below 7 is ideal). Absolutely don't agitate rayon at all or it will shrink. Hand wash in cold water with a very mild detergent. Gently press out water and hang dry. When washing clothes in the washing machine, use a detergent that is free of fragrance.

### **SKIP MOTH BALLS AND USE REPELLANT HERBS.**

Moth balls are carcinogens. Natural Moth Ball sachets are lovely to tuck into sweater drawers and hang in closets. Most health food stores sell bulk dried herbs. Blend 2 ounces each of dried rosemary and mint, 1 ounce each of dried thyme and ginseng, and 8 ounces of whole cloves, and put in sachet pouches.



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## You Feel Great! (cont'd)

### **GO ORGANIC ON YOUR LAWN AND IN YOUR GARDEN.**

Just say no to chemicals and find local help for going organic from garden centers that know the plants and techniques that work for your habitat.

### **ELIMINATE PESTICIDE USAGE FROM YOUR HOME.**

Rid your house of fleas using pure citrus solvent sprays (unless you have cats, or there is someone with asthma in the house) as it will kill all stages of the flea. For example, place ¼ cup of Citra Solve in a spray bottle with two cups of water. Use this spray for ants, too. Rose Geranium repels ticks, and you can put a drop on dog's collars, or on your clothing. Neam oil repels wool moths.

### **GROW LOTS OF HOUSEPLANTS - THEY HELP REDUCE POLLUTION IN YOUR HOME.**

Spider plants are particularly good at absorbing formaldehyde. English Ivy is great for this, too, as is the Boston Fern and the rubber plant.

### **CHOOSE BUILDING PRODUCTS THAT ARE THE MOST INERT AND NATURAL.**

These will also be products that are low in volatile organic chemicals (VOCs), such as zero VOC paints, no formaldehyde, etc.

### **MOVE TO ALL NATURAL FIBERS AND AWAY FROM PLASTICS.**

Wool, cotton, linen, silk: they all breathe with your body and give you benefit. Plastics, polyesters, and other synthetic materials don't breathe and many are toxic and cause reproductive harm and more. Switch to a cotton duck or hemp shower curtain and liner, choose natural and preferably organic bedding whenever you can afford to, and let nature's fabrics make your body feel good.



# Going Green Means...

## You Eat Well!

### **CHOOSE ORGANIC FOOD.**

Organically-grown and produced foods taste better--and they're better for you and the environment. If you can't buy all-organic all the time, at least buy these top ten items organically, since pesticide residues in this produce can be high, according to the Environmental Working Group: Peaches, apples, pears, winter squash, green beans, grapes, strawberries, spinach, and potatoes.

### **EAT SEASONAL, LOCALLY-GROWN FOODS.**

Reduce the pollution associated with trucking (or flying) in distantly-produced foods and support your local farms at the same time.

### **CHOOSE WHOLE FOODS.**

Avoid white foods--refined white flour and sugar for example--and use natural whole grains and sweeteners instead. Millet, quinoa, spelt, and other whole grains are enjoying a comeback not only because they're good for us and high in fiber, but because they taste delicious. Avoid genetically modified foods.

### **EAT A VARIETY OF COLORFUL FOODS.**

Make sure you get a variety of anti-oxidant- colorful fruits and vegetables every day as a simple way to improve your and your family's health.

### **AVOID PROCESSED AND FAST FOODS.**

When we choose foods that are natural and minimally processed, we avoid hydrogenated trans fats and many chemical food additives such as neurotoxic food dyes, that can cause health problems.

### **BUY IN BULK.**

Much of the garbage we generate is packaging; buying in bulk reduces a significant amount of waste. (Buying food in bulk saves you money, too.)

# Going Green Means...

## You Eat Well! (cont'd)

### **EAT A VARIETY OF FOOD.**

"The loss of genetic diversity - silent, rapid, inexorable - is leading us to a rendezvous with extinction, to the doorstep of hunger on a scale we refuse to imagine," writes Kenny Ausubel in the book *Seeds of Change: The Living Treasure*. For example, if farms rely on only a few strains of wheat and a blight kills those strains, there is no wheat unless some diverse types of wheat can be used instead. Organic farms grow a wide variety and diversity of plants.

### **EAT LOW ON THE FOOD CHAIN.**

Humans can eat both high and low on the food chain and be adequately nourished. Residues of persistent chemicals such as DDT, PCBs, dioxin, and many pesticides concentrate in animal fat. Foods high on the food chain, such as beef, require much larger amounts of resources including water. Avoid eating these fish during childbearing years and if you are breastfeeding because of heavy metal contamination: shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tilefish.

### **WASH YOUR FRUITS AND VEGGIES.**

Try this all-natural veggie wash formula to remove chemical residue and bacteria. Fill one spray bottle with vinegar, and one with hydrogen peroxide. Rinse produce, then spray with vinegar. Rinse and spray with hydrogen peroxide. Repeat two more times, then rinse thoroughly.

# Going Green Means...



## You Save Energy!

### **TURN DOWN THE HEAT, OR UP THE COOLING.**

Each degree you turn down the heat saves 3 percent of heating costs, while each degree you raise the temperature of your air conditioner saves 3-4 percent of cooling costs. By changing the temperature by two degrees all year you can save about 2,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

### **COOK WITH SIMPLER APPLIANCES.**

A slow cooker or a toaster oven (or even a solar oven!) reduces electrical use significantly compared to more mainstay kitchen appliances. For a meal that requires 1 hour to cook in an electric oven, and which uses 2.7 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>, a crockpot uses 0.9 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> for seven hours, a toaster oven takes 1.3 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> for 50 minutes, and a microwave only 0.5 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> for 15 minutes of cooking.

### **SWITCH TO A LAPTOP.**

Switching to a laptop instead of a desktop computer cuts three-quarters off your electrical use. Turn off the laptop at the end of the day.

### **WASH CLOTHES IN COLD WATER AND HANG DRY.**

Switch the cold water washing and save 80 percent on energy used for laundry and save an estimated \$60 a year. Hang dry your clothes instead of using the dryer and save 700 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

### **UNPLUG.**

Plug anything that can be powered by a remote control or that has a power cube transformer (little black box) into a power strip, and turn it off, and/or unplug, when not in use. (Power cubes are 60-80 percent inefficient.)

### **TURN OFF THE LIGHTS.**

Turn off lights when you aren't using them and reduce your direct lighting energy use by 45 percent. Stop using heat-producing halogen lamps (they can also be fire hazards). Install occupancy or motion sensors on outdoor lights.

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## You Save Energy! (cont'd)

### **SWITCH TO COMPACT FLUORESCENT BULBS.**

Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs from regular ones and use 60 percent less energy per bulb and save 300 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

### **WRAP YOUR WATER HEATER.**

Wrap your water heater in an insulation blanket and save 1,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> a year. Insulate your hot water pipes.

### **THINK TWICE BEFORE JUMPING IN THE CAR.**

Use public transportation whenever possible, carpool, shop locally, and ideally switch to a hybrid or energy-efficient car (if you haven't already).

### **INFLATE YOUR TIRES.**

Keep your tires inflated to improve gas mileage by three percent. Every gallon you save also saves 20 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

### **BUY ENERGY EFFICIENT/ENERGY STAR APPLIANCES.**



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## You Save Money!

### **CONSIDER SIMPLICITY INSTEAD OF CLUTTER.**

You'll find you'll buy less and choose more carefully. This decision alone will most likely save you the most regarding your buying of "things."

### **BUY SALVAGE AND SECOND-HAND.**

Buy Salvage and Second-Hand. Salvage outlets are an incredible opportunity for buying gorgeous building supplies at next to nothing. (And don't assume all you'll find are broken doors. One Care2 staff member bought an imported and handmade \$60,000 kitchen cabinet set in perfect shape, for \$3,000 through salvage.) There is also nothing like a good yard sale, or a great find at a second-hand store. Visit quaint "second hand Rose" shops and you'll find you actually have fun!

### **START A PRODUCT TIME SHARE.**

Why buy a steam carpet cleaner alone when you only use it two times a year? Join with some friends for these big ticket items instead. You all save money, and resources, too. Have a friendly get-together and work out an amicable schedule for using the merchandise.

### **NONTOXIC CLEANING SAVES.**

If you learn how to make formulas for nontoxic cleaning (see Care2's Healthy Living channels for hundreds of tips) you will spend pennies on your cleaning products, compared to traditional products. And this includes your buying a good "green" concentrated detergent. If you went out and bought all the products at the supermarket you'd spend around \$70, compared to \$10 on a few basic ingredients.

### **SAVE ENERGY, WATER, ETC.**

Most energy-saving and resource reduction tips save you considerable amount of money. See "Save Energy," above.



# Going Green Means...



## You Save Money! (cont'd)

### **TAKE A LOOK AT "RIGHT-SIZE LIVING".**

Consider choosing the size of your home in relationship to the need for resources to heat in the winter and cool in the summer, and the electricity required. If you can afford to build a huge house that is off the grid and is made with renewable resources, maybe huge is perfect.

### **BE A FRUGAL TIGHTWAD.**

Buy what you need, and not what you want. You'll be amazed at how much you save. Far from downward mobility, such a lifestyle saves you money that you can then use in other ways than on "things." Why not give yourself more time in nature instead?

### **JOIN A CSA.**

You can save significantly on your organic food budget by joining a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), which means connecting with a nearby farm with whom you develop a relationship to buy food regularly if not weekly.

### **BUY WELL-MADE, LONG-LASTING PRODUCTS.**

False economy--buying that pitchfork that looked rickety but it was cheap--doesn't pay off if you just have to buy a new one in a few years. Shop carefully and well, for well-designed, well-crafted tools and appliances.

### **FREecycle, SHARE. HAVE A YARD SALE.**

Give and get things for free in your community at [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org). Or sell your used items on eBay, or join up with some neighbors and have a yearly neighborhood yard sale. In other words, just say no to the dump..

# Going Green Means...



## You Do Good!

### **OFFER YOURSELF.**

Offer Yourself. One Person Really Does Make a Difference. Volunteer for green! Do you love to garden? Join your community's garden committee and help push them towards organic.

### **SUPPORT CAUSES ON THE PETITIONSITE.**

You can sign a petition or create your own and make your voice heard on causes that matter to you!

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/>

### **CLICK TO DONATE; RACE FOR A GOOD CAUSE.**

Click to Donate; Race for a Good Cause. Your FREE clicks generate donations to causes you care about. Are you concerned about global warming? Oceans? Habitat for the big cats? The rain forest? Explore the many click-to-donate races on Care2 and make a difference: <http://www.care2.com/click2donate/>

### **VOTE WITH YOUR DOLLARS, SHOP FOR THE PLANET.**

Every time you buy a green product instead of a product that uses non-renewable or energy-intensive products, you make your voice heard. Look for products with eco-labels such as Green Seal's approval, and those that are certified organic. Do some simple research on brands to find those who offer products with environmental integrity, a brand you can rely on, such as Seventh Generation or Ecover for cleaning products. When you buy from mainstream labels, use Care2's shopping center: A portion of the proceeds from your purchase will help to make a difference. <http://www.care2.com/shopping/>

### **DONATE TO A GREAT ORGANIZATION.**

Are you interested in saving heirloom seeds? Solar panels? Pandas? Chimps? Focus on the aspect of green that matters the most to you and find the nonprofits that serve to help in this area. Choose the one you want to support!



# Going Green Means...



## You Do Good! (cont'd)

### **PARTICIPATE IN CARE2'S DAILY ACTION.**

Make a quick difference every day for issues about the environment, health, and social justice.

<http://www.care2.com/dailyaction/homepage.html>

### **MOVE TOWARDS RIGHT LIVELIHOOD.**

Consider adjusting your career to be one that actively helps the world go green. Although many of us can't do this in an obvious way, we can all participate in greening the workplace. If even that isn't possible, find ways to help awaken hearts to green.

### **START AN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE IN YOUR SCHOOL OR BUSINESS.**

Systematically analyze the energy, cleaning product, and pesticide use of the building. You'll be amazed at what waste and toxics you'll find! Every bit helps, and this committee is a service to the health of everyone who spends time in the buildings, as well as the environment.

### **WORK FOR CONSERVATION.**

There are many ways you can help your community be a force for conservation. Do you have open fields, a wildlife habitat, or a wetland, an especially scenic location or an historic building on your land that you want to protect? Or do you know of such places in your town? Consider conservation easements. There is much to be done.

### **SPREAD THE NEWS.**

Share important news items that are important for people to know about the environment, green living, animals, and more. Care2's community powered news enables you to find articles that matter, post them on the site, and vote on those articles that you think need to be highlighted. <http://www.care2.com/news/>



# Going Green Means...



## You Celebrate!

### **CELEBRATE USING SOLID GOODS.**

Use washable cloth napkins and flatware rather than disposable paper products and hormone-disrupting plastics. If you must use disposables, many companies are now making inexpensive products from bamboo and other natural materials, and recycled-paper napkins are getting easier to find.

### **ILLUMINATE WITH CLEANER CANDLES.**

Avoid artificially-scented paraffin candles and switch to clean-burning beeswax or soy-based, essential-oil or unscented candles instead.

### **GIVE GUESTS A TREAT WITH LOCAL, SEASONAL, ORGANIC FOOD.**

Cut down on pollution from transporting far-away food, support local farmers, reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides and get fresher, more delicious meals at the same time. (See Eat Well.)

### **DECORATE WITH NATURE.**

At holiday time--or any time--decorate with nature. Rather than buying artificial doodads for your table, tree, or home, consider the beauty of flowers, fruits, pinecones, herbs, berried twigs, and other gorgeous (and mostly free) offerings from nature.

### **LEARN ECO-FRIENDLY GRILLING.**

Use a metal chimney to start your charcoal rather than toxic petroleum-based lighter fluid. They cost around \$20 dollars at your local hardware store and they last a long, long time.

# Going Green Means...

## You Celebrate! (cont'd)

### **BE OUTDOORS WITH NATURAL BUG REPELLANTS.**

For al fresco celebrations, use herbal-based natural bug repellents to keep flying pests at bay. Here's one great formula: combine 10 drops lemon balm essential oil, 10 drops lavender essential oil, and 2 tablespoons olive oil. Dab on clothing and exposed skin. (Use only pure essential oils, and be sure to consult a medical professional if you are pregnant, nursing, or have a serious health condition before using them.)

### **TRY PAPERLESS INVITATIONS.**

Cut down paper use instead of trees with e-vites. If you must have hard-copy, check out the huge range of gorgeous recycled paper invitations available these days.

### **GIVE ECO-GIFTS.**

Mark holidays, birthdays, and other special celebrations with eco-conscious gifts. You can make donations to hundreds of eco-worthy causes, or buy gifts that help to sustain the environment.

### **ENCOURAGE CARPOOLING.**

If your guests are coming from afar, see if you can network to reduce transportation pollution. Besides, sharing a ride is a great way for old friends to reconnect or for new ones to get to know one another better.

### **DECORATE WITH ORGANIC FLOWERS.**

If you are buying flower arrangements, be sure to choose organic flowers. They're better for the planet, your health, and the health of the floral workers!

# Going Green Means...



## You Preserve Resources!

### **SAVE WATER INSIDE THE HOME.**

Install a low-flow showerhead to reduce water consumption by 30 percent. Also install a kitchen faucet aerator to reduce water flow to 1.5 gallons-per-minute, and a bath aerator to reduce water flow to 1-gallon-per minute and reduce your water consumption by half.

### **SAVE WATER AND TIME IN YOUR YARD.**

Establish a rain barrel. If you live in a desert climate switch to plants that will survive without much water (research xeriscaping).

### **REUSE.**

Switch to reusable containers such as coffee mugs and stainless steel water bottles. Plastic storage? Glass food storage containers are better for health and the environment.

### **BE SAFE AND SOUND IN YOUR YARD.**

Use only sustainably harvested or recycled plastic lumber and not pressure-treated lumber in deck and outdoor furniture projects.

### **CHOOSE BAMBOO.**

Choose Bamboo. Instead of wood for projects (even renewably harvested) switch to the vastly and quickly renewable resource, bamboo, a very woody grass. It can grow from 60 to 150 feet in a few months. The root system sends up new shoots after the grass is harvested, so it doesn't need to be replaced.

# Going Green Means...



## You Preserve Resources! (cont'd)

### **REPLACE PAPER WITH RENEWABLES.**

A wonderful switch that saves money, too, is to buy a few sets of natural fiber napkins and eliminate buying paper napkins. Likewise, switch to old cotton rags instead of paper towels. Make your own list of how to reduce your paper use, including getting off junk mail lists and here is one resource to help: [www.dmaconsumers.org](http://www.dmaconsumers.org) . Bring your own grocery bag when you shop. Join the library.

### **RECYCLE ALUMINUM.**

Each aluminum can you recycle offsets the carbon used to run your computer or television set for three hours. Recycle as much as you can of everything you can.

### **COMPOST (YOU CAN DO IT WITH WORMS IN THE CITY)**

Composting can be done anywhere (check out [www.wormwoman.com](http://www.wormwoman.com) for directions in worm composting if you live in an urban area). You will be astonished at how much you reduce your garbage if you compost, and that gorgeous compost is awesome for garden soil.

### **BUY SOLAR.**

Everything from calculators to radios are available in solar these days, as well as solar panels to heat your hot water heater!

Visit [RealGoods.com](http://RealGoods.com) for many resources.

### **RECYCLE.**

Call your local recycling center for all the information and tools you need to recycle well for where you live.

# Go Green!



## **ABOUT ANNIE B. BOND**

Annie is the executive producer of Care2.com's Healthy Living channels. She brings over 20 years of experience as a leading authority, writer and editor about the connections between the environment, personal health and well-being. Annie has authored four books, including: *Home Enlightenment* (Rodale Press, 2005), *Better Basics for the Home* (Three Rivers Press, 1999), *Clean & Green* (Ceres Press, 1990), and *The Green Kitchen Handbook* (with Mothers & Others; foreword by Meryl Streep) (HarperCollins, 1997), and wrote the chapter on cleaning in *The Healthy School Handbook* (NEA Professional Library, 1995). She was founder and editor-in-chief of *Green Alternatives for Health and the Environment*, the national consumer magazine designed to provide a community to the emerging environmental health field, and the founding editor of *The Green Guide* (a publication of Mothers & Others), an Utne Reader Alternative Press award recipient for general excellence in newsletters.

Annie also authors *Care2 Ask Annie*, a tip-filled Q & A that offers practical help, recipes, and solutions to meet your concerns about environmental health, the environment, natural, and simple living.

## **ABOUT CARE2**

With more than 7 million members Care2 is the largest online community of conscious consumers. Care2 members discover, share and take action each day on the causes and subjects that are shaping our world environmental conservation, human rights, green living and more. Care2 provides information and services to help people make a difference including the most tips for living a greener life, the most popular online petition service to support nonprofit initiatives, and a forum for people with shared values to connect with one another.

